

their first support system. However, they later received less poetic but equally public-spirited support from the SBA. They prepared people for success in the food business through hands-on training and with the lowest teacher-student ratio in the entire Nation. They offer lifelong support and financial aid to their students. They now have a 100 percent placement record. Starting from nothing, they now have 188 employees, 400 students, and revenues of nearly \$100 million. They are our first runners-up. Give them a hand. [Applause]

After I leave you today, I'm going over to sign the school-to-work bill, something that has immense significance to the small business community. It begins to establish a Federal partnership for a network of training young people who graduate from high school, don't want to go on to 4-year colleges, but do need further training. All of our competitors have much more well-organized systems, particularly the Germans, than we do in providing further training. One of our first school-to-work trainees, I guess the first one we've been involved in, and someone they trained who now works at Blair House, so you want to—come on up, Francis—explain this.

Francis Voigt. She's right out here, Karen Webber. Karen, come on up.

You know, entrepreneurs can't help themselves; we're always looking for opportunities to promote our organization. We just visited the Blair House yesterday to see how our student was doing. The executive chef arranged for her to come by this morning and present a hat to the President.

The President. You all probably know this, but Blair House is the official guest residence

for the President. That's where—when foreign leaders come to stay, for example, they all stay in Blair House.

So, are you doing a good job over there? [Laughter]

Karen Webber. Absolutely.

The President. Thank you. You all go over there and stand, and we'll do this.

[*Ms. Webber presented the President with a hat.*]

The President. I'll use this, this weekend. [Laughter]

Our winner is Lorraine Miller from Salt Lake City, the president of Cactus and Tropicals. Come on up here. You stand here while I talk about you.

Lorraine is president of Cactus and Tropicals in Salt Lake City, Utah. She began with just a love of growing plants, half of her \$2,000 life savings, and a dream. She found a boarded-up building, lived above it, and worked 7 days a week. She's overcome reluctant bankers, salesmen who refused to believe a woman made the decisions, and the loss of her store to eminent domain. One winter, she thawed the frozen ground with briquettes to dig the footings for her greenhouse.

Today, she has 4 greenhouses, 15 employees, over \$1 million in sales, and a business growing at a rate of 20 percent a year. For her job and her persistence and her symbolism of the entrepreneurial spirit of America, Lorraine Miller has been chosen the Small Business Person of the Year.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Remarks at a Department of Housing and Urban Development Crime Briefing

May 4, 1994

Thank you very much, Secretary Cisneros, ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to see you here, and I know what you've been here talking about.

I just want to make sure that you know when you heard from the Vice President and then Secretary Cisneros, that you were looking at two

of People magazine's 50 most beautiful people of the year. [Laughter] Some of us resent that. All I can tell you is that I hope to live to see both of them become President of the United States—[laughter]—because they would not only be outstanding Presidents, they would quickly lose any eligibility for that title.

I want to thank you for many things; first, for working with Secretary Cisneros and the people of HUD to deal with the problem of safety in public housing. And especially, I want to thank my good friend Vince Lane and the other folks in Chicago who tried to help us work through this court decision so that the people who live in these units would still have the right to be protected from a level of crime and violence that many Americans would find it impossible even to imagine.

I also want to ask you—everyone who is here today and everybody who's associated with public housing and every law enforcement officer who is here and all those whom you represent—to call every Member of Congress in the next 24 hours and ask them to vote on this assault weapons ban for law enforcement. This is an amazing conflict. It is a conflict that pits, on opposite sides, people that ought not to be on opposite sides.

People who are concerned with law enforcement and public safety and people who know about it and live it are overwhelmingly in favor of this assault weapons ban. They are being told by people who represent the folks who are against this that they really don't understand, that they're not in any more danger from these assault weapons than they would be from a hunting rifle. I find that amazing that any American, after what we have been through on our streets and in our schools in the last few years, could stand up and look into the eyes of the law enforcement community of America and tell them, "You don't know that your life's in more danger." I don't see how they could say it, looking into the statistics of what the emergency rooms of this country have faced in the last 10 or 15 years. If you want to talk about it just crassly, just go back and look at the statistics on gunshot victims outside the home in emergency rooms in major cities in the last 10 years, and look what the average number of bullets you find in the bodies of people who show up are.

And so I understand this is a tough political vote for the House of Representatives, and I know we started way behind. And I know that as late as yesterday, I was still talking through with Members actually what is in the bill. A lot of people didn't know, for example, that the bill grandfathered the possession of these weapons on the part of sportsmen who like to shoot a couple of them at the ranges in contests. Well,

they can keep those weapons operating for decades if they take good care of them, literally decades. But people who use them on the street in crimes and gangs, they won't take as good care of them. A lot of them will be washed up; we'll get them out of the system much more quickly. But the people who have them will not lose them now by law.

I still find that we've got—a lot of the problems we've got with this bill are literally making sure that everybody knows everything that's in it. But the big problem is the political fight. And I just would implore you to call everybody you can. They say we haven't got any chance to win, but they already admit we've made up 50 votes over where we were last time this thing was voted on. And I think we do have a chance if every law enforcement officer who knows every Member of Congress would call those people and say, "This is not a partisan issue. This is a question of law enforcement and safety for Americans and sensible policy. And don't you believe those people who tell you that we don't know what we're talking about. We are on the receiving end of these bullets, and we can count, thank you very much. We do understand the difference between being shot at with a revolver and something with 12 rounds, 15 rounds, 30 rounds, or 60 rounds. We can count."

And I believe if you can make it just that simple, then it is our job to answer all the factual questions that we are being asked by people from rural districts, who in good conscience have to be able to answer these questions to the sportsmen in their districts. We can answer those questions to their satisfaction if you will lay the hammer down and say, this is about standing with law enforcement and children and safety and the future. We are beginning to put some sanity back into our laws, and the American people are beginning to demand that we have greater safety in our homes, on our streets, in our schools.

This crime bill's got a lot of good things in it. It's going to ban possession of all handguns by minors, except under controlled circumstances with approved supervision. It's going to give us the money we need to provide security, metal detectors and other things, in schools. It's going to put more police officers on the street. It's got a lot of good things. But we ought not to walk away from this. We ought to put it in. It's right for law enforcement.

And if you guys will do this—if the men and women of law enforcement in America will call the Congress in the next 24 hours and say, “Do this one for us, and don’t believe all those people telling you that we don’t know our own best interest and we don’t really know what’s good for people on our streets. We do. We have been on the wrong end of those weapons, and we know we’ll be better off without having to look down those barrels anymore. Help us. Help us. Stand up for law enforcement. Stand

up for safety. Stand up for the kids of this country”—we’ve still got a chance to win this thing, and we need your help. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. in the Indian Treaty Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Vince Lane, chairman, Chicago Housing Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994

May 4, 1994

Hey, Chris, just go on and sit in my seat. If you keep talking like that you’ll occupy it someday anyway. *[Laughter]*

My goodness, he was good. You know, all of us, I think, carry around inside progressive impulses and conservative impulses that send us different messages from time to time. And one of the conservative impulses that has been honed in me over time is always be careful what you do because of the law of unintended consequences. Well, when I think of the enormous bipartisan support this legislation has had, it didn’t seem to me that there could possibly be any adverse unintended consequences. But do you realize what Chris Brady has done today by telling us what he does? Do you have any idea how many criminals all over the world have always wondered who monitored those \$10,000 transfers for the IRS? What the heck, it was worth it to get the bill and to meet him. *[Laughter]*

You know, when a President signs a bill into law, normally he just needs the bill, a pen, and a desk. And ordinarily, the bill and the pen get the top billing; he signs the bill, hands out the pens. Today we’re going to try to give the desk a little higher billing. It’s no ordinary desk, and its presence here today, as much as any speech or ceremony, symbolizes what this bill is all about.

Last month Janet Swenson gave her students at the Manufacturing Technology Project in Flint, Michigan, an assignment: Suppose the President wanted you to design a desk and build it to use at a White House ceremony. It couldn’t

look like a typical desk. It had to be inexpensive. It had to be easy to move and reassemble. Within an hour, eight of her students had formed a project team, drawn up rough blueprints, and even called a supplier to check on the availability of materials.

Then they went to work. They drew on their knowledge of geometry and applied math to tinker with the blueprints. They negotiated with the vendors and bought the proper supplies. They built the desk at their center in Flint, Michigan. Then they broke it down, packed it up, and brought it with them to Washington. Yesterday, with a few Allen wrenches, they put it back together again here on the White House lawn, and here it is. This is a custom-made piece of furniture, developed, designed, built, delivered, and assembled by eight young people, none of whom is older than 20 years of age. I’d like to ask them to stand, along with their teacher. Where are they? Stand up. Here they are, these eight. Give them a hand. *[Applause]*

This bill is not the end of a journey. It’s not a problem that has been solved. Instead, it’s a whole new approach to work and learning. Hillary and I were talking up here, as we looked out across this vast sea of faces of those of you whom we have known and worked with for so many years on this issue. I was thinking about how many nights I have talked to Bob Reich about this subject over the last 10 years, long before he ever dreamed he’d be Secretary of Labor and certainly before even his fertile imagination could have figured out how I might be able to appoint him someday. *[Laughter]*